Three Hundred And Eighteen

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Three Hundred And Eighteen

by Bordementions

Summary

Meno/tore hospital hurt/comfort

Notes

Another fic for the infinite fenomeno torture nexus

https://discord.gg/XqJzJ6ByTz

The late afternoon sun filtered through the blinds of the hospital room, casting long, slanting bars of amber light across the sterile white sheets.

For nearly six months, this room had been your entire world. The hum of the heart monitor and the quiet drip of the IV fluid were the familiar background track to a long, exhausting recovery that had kept you bedridden, sidelined from your duties as a trainer at Tracen Academy.

Though right on cue, the heavy wooden door clicked open. Standing in the doorway at a rather imposing height was Fenomeno. Even in a hospital setting, he wore his full racing uniform—the heavy tactical coat and his large officer's cap tilted just so, his sharp, deep violet eyes immediately scanning the room to assess the situation.

"Situation report, Boss!" Meno announced, his voice carrying its usual disciplined, booming resonance before he quickly caught himself, remembering the quiet environment of the ward. He flustered slightly, adjusting his visor. "Ah—my apologies. I did not mean to disrupt the peace of the medical facility. How are you feeling today?"

"Hey, Meno," you said, your voice a bit raspy from disuse, offering him a weak but genuine smile. "Right on time, as always. I'm doing alright. Just another day of resting."

"Affirmative. Consistency in recovery is paramount," Meno said, marching into the room with measured, deliberate steps. In his hands, he carefully carried a plastic convenience store bag. The distinct, savory aroma of fried noodles and Worcestershire sauce immediately filling room.

He set the bag down on the bedside table and pulled out two plastic containers of local store-bought yakisoba. Without missing a beat, he glanced over at the corner counter. There, stacked neatly in tall, slightly precarious columns, were dozens of empty, cleaned plastic containers from his previous visits—a testament to his absolute dedication to this daily ritual.

"I have secured the rations for this evening's visit," Meno stated, holding one container out toward you. "Freshly prepared from the usual establishment. It is vital that you maintain your caloric intake to assist with your rehabilitation, Boss."

In truth, your appetite had been practically nonexistent for weeks, a

side effect of the long-term medication and lack of activity. You couldn't manage more than a bite or two of heavy food without feeling unwell, but you never had the heart to tell him. He looked so earnest, his tail swishing slightly behind him in anticipation.

"Thanks, Meno, it looks great," you said, taking the warm container and holding it in your lap to be polite. "But to be honest, the doctors had me on a pretty strict feeding schedule earlier today, and I'm still pretty full. Sorry, but do you think you could handle my portion again? I'd hate to see it go to waste."

Meno paused, his sharp, slanted eyes widening slightly in concern. He looked down at the container in your hands, then back up to your face, analyzing your expression with the seriousness of a formal investigation.

"Are you certain, Boss? Skipping meals could negatively impact your recovery," he questioned, his tone deeply earnest. "I must double-check. If you require a different meal, I can immediately depart to look for an alternative."

"No, no, really, I'm okay," you reassured him with a chuckle. "I just want you to have it. You've been training hard, right? You need the energy more than I do right now."

Meno stared at the container for a moment longer before letting out a soft sigh, the stiff, officer-like posture melting away into something much more relaxed and familiar. "Understood. If that is your directive, Boss... I shall consume the secondary portion. Waste is, after all, a violation in its own right."

He took the container back, cracked open the chopsticks, and took a seat in the oversized chair beside your bed. For the next hour, the rhythmic ticking of the clock was drowned out by Meno's thorough, detailed recounting of his day.

"The morning patrol went according to protocol," Meno explained between bites of noodles. "Though, there was a minor incident at the third intersection near the shopping district. A group of primary school students attempted to cross while the pedestrian signal was flashing. I immediately intervened to enforce safety regulations."

You smiled, leaning back against your pillows. "Let me guess. You gave them a full legal breakdown of crosswalk safety?"

Meno's cheeks flushed a light shade of pink, and he looked down at

his yakisoba, his long hair falling forward slightly. "I... may have been a bit excessive in my lecture, but I simply wanted to ensure they understood the gravity of moving vehicles!"

"You always mean well, Meno," you said softly. "They'll realize eventually that you're just looking out for them."

"I hope so, Boss," he said, his tone softening as he looked out the window at the setting sun. "The Academy feels different without you there. The training grounds are orderly, but... your absence is noted. I am maintaining my regime exactly as you outlined before the hospitalization, but I look forward to the day you can issue orders in person again."

"Me too," you replied, watching the steady rise and fall of his shoulders.

You leaned back a bit further into the pillows, shifting your weight slightly to find a comfortable position. The numbing scent of the room seemed to fade whenever Meno was around, replaced by the comforting, grounded presence of your racer.

"Hey, Meno," you started, your voice dropping to a quieter, more reflective tone. "I was thinking about it the other day... it’s been quite some time now since you’ve been assigned to another trainer to cover for me, hasn't it? How has that been going for you?"

Meno paused mid-bite, his chopsticks hovering just above the plastic container. His tail gave a single, slow movement against the floorboards. "The temporary administrative assignment is... adequate, Boss. My new trainer is thorough with paperwork, and the training schedules are strict. But it is merely a functional arrangement."

"Well, whatever they're doing, it's clearly working," you said with a fond smile, looking at him warmly. "I still read the sports pages and look at the Tracen broadcast network whenever the nurses let me have the remote. I heard you've been doing extremely well recently. You’ve been traveling all over Japan, right? Racing at all the major events and tracks."

Meno's ears twitched upward, a somewhat similar faint blush creeping onto his face at the direct praise, same as earlier. "I have simply been executing my duties on the track to the absolute best of my physical capabilities, Boss. Every race is a mission that must be completed."

"It’s more than just completing a mission, Meno. You’re dominating

out there," you said, your voice full of genuine pride. "They're even starting to talk about you for some big international competitions. Do you realize how huge that is? I just wanted to say... congratulations. Seriously. I am so, so proud of you."

He froze completely, his deep violet eyes locking onto yours. The raw sincerity in your voice always caught him off guard, stripping away his rigid officer persona faster than any official reprimand ever could.

"You're going out there to do greater things, Meno," you continued, your smile turning a little bittersweet as you looked down at your hands resting on the thin hospital blanket. "Greater than you ever could have done if you were still stuck here with me. Look at all the places you're going to get to see now, all the different tracks, the massive crowds... the people you're going to meet. You're meant for the global stage."

You let out a soft, self-deprecating laugh, gesturing vaguely to the IV pole and the monitors surrounding your bed. "Honestly, this whole situation... maybe it was a blessing in disguise for your career. If I hadn't ended up bedridden like this, I probably would have kept you running the same local circuits, holding you back from what you're really capable of."

The temperature in the room felt like it dropped a fraction of a degree.

Meno didn't speak. His jaw tightened, and his grip on the plastic chopsticks grew so firm that the cheap wood creaked under the latent strength. His sharp, slanted eyes darkened, flashing with a sudden, intense heat that he usually tried to control. He looked at you, his chest rising and falling heavily, a deep, protective instinct visibly warring with his ingrained respect for you.

He hated it. He absolutely loathed it when you talked about yourself like that—downplaying your worth, treating your illness like some kind of inconvenient anchor that had been dragging him down. It was a complete violation of what he saw as the truth.

But he kept his mouth shut. He didn't want to raise his voice here, and more than anything, he didn't want to stress you out or make you feel defensive while you were already so physically vulnerable. So, he forced the fiery protest back down his throat, swallowing it alongside a massive bite of yakisoba, his ears pinned flat against his hair.

Sensing the sudden, heavy shift in his aura, you quickly realized you might have touched a nerve. You stretched out a hand, lightly tapping

the edge of his sleeve to get his attention, putting on your best, most energetic smile to break the tension.

"Hey, come on, don't give me that glare!" you teased gently, your tone light and cheering. "I'm the one on bed rest, remember? You're supposed to be keeping my spirits up! Think about it this way—when you finally make it to Europe or the Americas, you have to bring me back some of those ridiculous, oversized souvenirs. I expect a full, detailed report on international track conditions, too. You're my star athlete, Meno. I'm going to be bragging to every nurse on this floor that some champion out there calls me 'Boss.'"

Meno looked at your outstretched hand, then up at your smiling face. The rigid tension in his shoulders slowly, reluctantly dissolved. He let out a long, slow breath through his nose, his ears tilting back up into an attentive position.

"If... if that is your desire, Boss," he said softly, his voice thick with an emotion he was trying very hard to suppress. "Then I shall secure the highest quality international documentation and souvenirs for your review. I will not fail to meet your expectations."

You kept the smile fixed on your face, pushing past the deep exhaustion that seemed to ache right down to your bones. You needed to be strong for him right now. You needed to be the trainer he remembered, not a patient wasting away in bed.

"No matter where they send you, Meno, I know you're going to handle it," you said, your voice carrying as much warmth and certainty as you could muster. "Tokyo, Kyoto, London, Paris... it doesn't matter the turf or the weather. You're going to go out there, you're going to follow the regulations, and you're going to win. I'll be right here, glued to that little hospital TV, cheering for you so loudly the nurses will probably have to come in and give me a citation for noise violations."

You let out a soft chuckle, leaning forward just a fraction. "And hey, once I get a bit better and finish up with this rehab, maybe I'll even be able to travel. I'll get out of this bed, buy a ticket, and cheer for you right from the front row of the stands. How does that sound?"

Meno's ears instantly swiveled forward, standing completely straight. His eyes lit up with a sudden, pure radiance. Any and all remaining tension that had been hanging over his shoulders vanished in an instant, replaced by a wave of raw, childlike hope. His tail gave a sudden, enthusiastic thump against the side of the chair.

"Do you... do you truly believe that will be possible, Boss?" he asked, his voice losing all of its rigid cadence, sounding incredibly vulnerable. He leaned forward, his massive frame casting a large shadow over your bed, but his expression was entirely soft. "The medical staff... they believe your recovery schedule will allow for travel? If you were in the stands... if you could come with me..."

Looking into his eyes, seeing the sheer, unadulterated joy radiating from him, a physical ache squeezed your chest.

The doctors had pulled you aside not even a week ago. There was no recovery schedule. There was no planned rehab. The condition had progressed too far, deeply rooted inside your blood, and they had gently, clinically, delivered the final verdict: it was terminal. You had months left, maybe less, and you were never going to leave this bed on your two feet, let alone board a plane to see him race across the globe.

But looking at his hopeful, devoted face... you couldn't bear to break his heart. You couldn't let the shadow of your reality ruin the bright, beautiful future waiting for him.

So, you lied. Again.

"Yeah, Meno," you said, keeping your voice steady and your smile bright, even as your throat tightened. "The doctors are doing everything they can. I should be getting a lot better soon. Once I'm out of here, we'll go see all those places together. I promise."

"Affirmative!" Meno beamed, a dumb, brilliant smile breaking across his face. "I shall hold you to that promise, Boss! I will prepare the ultimate itinerary for us!"

"I look forward to it," you murmured gently. You gestured for him to come closer. "Hey, lean down for a second. Your uniform is a mess."

Meno immediately complied, bending his height down toward the bed, tilting his head so you could reach him. With slow, slightly trembling fingers, you reached up and straightened the shoulder cord on his left side, smoothing out the fabric of his coat. Then, you reached up and gently adjusted his hat, leveling the visor so it sat perfectly above his eyes.

Once he was put together, you let your hand rest on the top of his head, gently patting his large fluffy ears.

"There. Perfect," you cooed softly, your tone full of love. "You're a good boy, Meno. Always taking care of everyone."

Meno’s ears twitched under your palm, and he went completely still, soaking in the praise with a quiet, blissful devotion.

"Now," you said, reluctantly pulling your hand back and resting it on the blanket. "I think it’s time for you to head back to the academy and get some real rest. You’ve got a lot of traveling ahead of you soon, and a disciplined officer needs his sleep. That's an order, Meno."

"Understood, Boss!" Meno stood up straight, snapping a crisp, textbook-perfect salute, though his eyes were warm and bright. "I shall execute the immediately. Thank you for the briefing. I will return tomorrow at the designated hour!"

With a final, happy flick of his tail, he gathered his things, opened the door, and slipped out into the quiet hospital corridor, the heavy wooden door clicking shut behind him.

The moment the latch clicked, the smile fell from your face. The artificial energy left your body all at once, leaving you feeling incredibly hollow and weak. The silence of the room rushed back in, heavy and suffocating.

You looked over at the bedside table. Meno had left the two empty plastic yakisoba containers sitting there, completely cleaned out.

With a grueling, agonizing effort, you swung your legs over the edge of the mattress. Every muscle in your body protested, a dull, heavy ache pulsing through your limbs as you forced yourself to stand. Grabbing the IV pole for support, your knuckles turning white as you leaned your weight into it, you dragged your feet across the cold floor toward the counter.

One agonizing step at a time, you reached the corner. You carefully lifted the two new empty containers and placed them on top of the existing plastic towers, adjusting them so they wouldn't topple over.

You lingered there for a moment, your hand resting on the smooth plastic, and began to count them. You counted every single one, tracing the columns down to the base.

Three hundred and eighteen containers.

Exactly one hundred and fifty-nine visits. One hundred and fifty-nine

days of him walking through that door, carrying the scent of the outside world, bringing a meal you couldn't eat, and giving you a reason to keep smiling. You stared at the tall plastic monuments, knowing down to your very core that the columns wouldn't grow much higher before the count finally stopped.

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